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NOTES ON HEBREW WORDS.

I.

MOST scholars, no doubt, have among their papers some notes on Hebrew words, bringing out results that have not been embodied in the current dictionaries. We seem to be now witnessing the commencement of a new movement in Hebrew lexicography. The first part of Siegfried and Stade's *Wörterbuch* has the great merit of resting on a fresh examination of every occurrence of each word—an enormous and, in many cases, a thankless labour, but a labour indispensable, if we are really to get beyond the standpoint of Gesenius. One can now compare the fruits of one's own observation, not only with the statements of Gesenius and his editors, but with a second dictionary, based on an independent study of the whole material. It is to be hoped that every one who has noticed anything important for the Hebrew Lexicon, which neither is to be found in the latest editions of Gesenius nor has suggested itself to Siegfried and Stade, will now get his notes together, and make them available for future editions of one or the other work. The labour of dictionary-making is so heavy that those who undertake it ought to receive every help that those who benefit by their toil can give. This is my justification for putting together a few isolated remarks on Hebrew words. They do not amount to much in themselves, but their publication may set a good example to readers of this magazine who have richer stores to draw on. I use the abbreviation "M. V." for Mühlau and Volck's 10th edition of Gesenius, and "S. S." for Siegfried and Stade (Abt. 1, 1892).

אֵזֶר M. V.: (1) Gürtel, (2) Fessel; S. S. (1) Gürtel, (2) Gürtel des Kriegers, (3) Band, Fessel. In each case the

last sense rests only on Job xii. 18. Neither lexicon gives any clear distinction between **אֲזוּר** and **הַגִּבּוֹר**, **הַגִּבּוֹרָה**. There is, however, a real difference between the two, which can be best got at by observing that **אֲזוּר** is etymologically the same as the Arabic *izār*, the Hebrew long *ā* being the usual equivalent of Arabic long *ā*, while the Arabic short *i* becomes **י** instead of **יָ** under the influence of the **א**. In Arabic itself we have a dialectic form, *îzār*. In the present day the *izār* is a large outer wrapper used by women; but in ancient times it was a waist-cloth or wrapper, covering only the lower part of the body, wound round the loins and tied with a knot. The *izār* round the loins and the *ridā* thrown over the shoulder are still the sacred vestments of pilgrims, who, in their visit to the Caaba at Mecca, retain the antique dress of their ancestors. The *Mîzar*, which now means a pair of drawers, was originally not different from the *izār*. (See *Hamāsa*, p. 81, v. 1, and Dozy *Dict. vêt.*, s.v.) The oldest Semitic dress consisted not of a shirt and a mantle or plaid (**כְּתוֹרָה** and **בִּגְד**), but of a waist-cloth and a plaid. The former is the *izār* or **אֲזוּר**, which, therefore, is not a belt worn above the robes, but an under-garment, or even, at a pinch, the only garment. All the passages in the Old Testament that speak of the **אֲזוּר** agree with this. It cleaves to a man's loins, *i.e.*, is next his skin, Jer. xiii. 11, where it supplies a figure for the closeness of the attachment between Israel and Jahveh. The same figure occurs in Isaiah xi. 5: righteousness and loyalty are the **אֲזוּר** of the ideal king, *i.e.*, the things nearest his heart, as the Arabs say of a man, *huwa minnī ma'qida 'l-izār*—"He is with respect to me in the place where the *izār* is knotted," *i.e.*, very near to me. Jeremiah's girdle is of linen, as we should expect of a priest; but the prophet Elijah, whose guise is that of primitive simplicity, wears a wrapper of skin about his loins. Like the old Arabs, he has but two garments, the *ēzār* or *izār*, and an **אֲדָרְתָּה** of hair-cloth (Ar. *shamla*, Heb. **שִׁמְלָה**). In Ezek. xxiii. 15 it is a peculiarity

of the Chaldæans that they wear the **אָזֹר** over their garments as a girdle, *i.e.*, they confine their flowing robes with a shawl instead of a simple belt—a mode of dress which is shown on the monuments.

We can now see that it is unnecessary to postulate any exceptional sense for **אָזֹר** in Job xii. 18, or to emend the text as G. Hoffmann does ; the scanty waist-cloth is the dress of captives, and the use of **אָסַר** in the sense “gird” is one of the Aramaisms of the book. That captives and mean slaves had only a waist-wrapper of sackcloth appears from such passages as Isaiah iii. 24, and this also is the dress of mourners, who as in Arabia left the upper part of the body uncovered (Ar. *hasir*). In Arabia boys also in the time of Mohammed seem to have worn nothing but the *izār* (Ibn Hishām, 117, l. 14) ; perhaps this throws some light on 2 Kings iii. 21, where **כָּל חֶגֶר חֲגָרָה** means every one old enough to fight. Boys, therefore, did not wear any garment that required to be confined with a belt ; they either had a simple waist-cloth or possibly a little unbelted tunic such as boys still wear in the East.

Finally the *ēzōr* or *izār*, which leaves all the limbs free, is the dress of the warrior, so far as he is not equipped in mail. On Assyrian monuments it appears as the only garment of the light armed troops. See the figure in Rawlinson's *Monarchies*, i. 430 ; cf. Isaiah v. 27, “The waist-cloth on their loins shall not be loosed” ; an accident that might easily happen to a wrapper secured only by a knot, as we see from the anecdote in Freytag, *Chrest. Ar.*, p. 72, where Jabala's *izār* becomes undone by a man treading on it. The warrior, to be sure, does not allow his waist-cloth to hang loose, but tucks it up tightly about his loins, leaving the legs bare. See, for example, *Hamāsa*, p. 383, last verse with Tibrīzī's note. The Arabs express this by saying, *Shadda 'l-izār, shammarā 'an-shawāhu*. Among the Hebrews the same sense seems to be implied in the phrase, “Gird up (**אָזַר**) the loins,” with or without the addition “like a man” (Job xxxviii. 4, xl. 7 ; Jer. i. 17), though

with the accusative of a thing the verb often means no more than "wear like an *ēzōr*." The Piel is causative of Qal, but passes, as conj. I., II., do in Arabic, into a figurative sense, "strengthen," "encourage," Isa. xlv. 5; Ibn Hishām, p. 155, l. 16, where it said of Chadīja that she "girded" the prophet for his work, *i.e.*, encouraged him to it. It is not clear whether the Hithp. in Isa. viii. 9 is reflexive, "gird yourselves," *i.e.*, put on the warrior's dress, or reciprocal, "strengthen and encourage one another."

The general impression produced by a survey of the usage of the word is that among the Hebrews the *ezōr* ceased to be part of ordinary dress pretty early, being superseded by the tunic (כרמרה), but that it was used by warriors, by the meanest classes, by prophets and mourners, and that the word (or the cognate verb) was also retained in proverbial phrases and similes, just as was the case with the Arabs after they ceased to wear the *izār* in daily life.

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